TRUMBULL COMMUNITY OUTREACH SURVEY RESULTS

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Study Objectives

- The Town Council of Trumbull, CT authorized further investigation of a "like new" renovation of the High School on March 5, 2007.
- Some residents of the Town were interested in learning whether the community would like to consider, at the same time, modifying the High School Complex to have it serve also as a Community Center and, if so, what types of facilities and programs they might like to see included.
- Additionally, there was a discussion of building a pool with dressing rooms and restrooms with a separate entrance as part of this renovation.
- This report summarizes the findings from a survey that was conducted to investigate these topics.

Methodology

- CMC Associates submitted a proposal to conduct this research with several different designs proposed. Major considerations at the time were many, including: overall study cost, timing to obtain top-line and final results, ease of administration and the ability to get a good cross-section of residents to participate.
- While the Town has residents who are more highly educated than the average city or town in this country, it still has households lacking a computer or the ability to complete a survey online.
- Certain methods, such as mailing a paper survey to every household in Town or inserting a questionnaire in the Trumbull Times, were too lengthy and cost prohibitive to provide results in sufficient time to prepare documentation

for the Town's plans to be prepared for the June deadline at the State level.

- As a result, a dual method of implementing the survey was selected. This methodology included hosting a link online at the Town's official Web site and distributing paper copies via several locations in the Town to reach seniors and others not, necessarily, computer savvy.
- The Board of Education also elected to put a link to the online survey via its Web site and, unofficially, a link was placed on www.trumbullchat.com.
- In total, 831 completed and usable surveys were obtained. A majority of these (664) were online with 167 on paper. This represents approximately a 6.8% response rate based upon the State's record of 12,251 Trumbull households in 2005.

- A representative from CMC Associates attended several public planning sessions, interviewed several Town officials, drafted and obtained approval for the questionnaire.
- Each household was welcomed to complete a single survey via one of the two methods with residents 18 and older being eligible.
- In a survey of this type, it is impossible to prevent anyone from participating more than once or to totally restrict multiple responses from any given household. The most advanced method that is available was utilized for online surveys that is, dropping a cookie on participants' computers to prevent them from re-entering the link once a survey was completed. Beyond this, it was necessary to rely upon residents' honor to abide by the rules.
- Paper surveys were examined to try to eliminate any duplications and to insure that all of the questions necessary for an analysis had been completed.

- There was a single open-ended question in the survey. Completed answers to this question were sampled and codes were constructed. Next, all completed surveys whether online or on paper were coded so that the openended question could be tabulated. Then, answers to all questions from the paper surveys were entered into the database and results were tabulated.
- It was evident from the demographics of survey respondents that the final sample is not truly representative of the Town. For example, only a fraction of residents between the ages of 18 and 24 were represented and those ages 65 and older comprised about 14% of the sample, while they represent about 22% of the population in Town. Similarly, those between 25 and 49 were over-represented.

- Additionally, women participated at twice the rate of men, which is not unusual given the subject matter.
- To determine if responses to key questions would change much, the data for interest in the Community Center and the pool were weighted to compensate for the age differences. In the end, the results changed a few percentage points in a downward direction but did not drastically change the sentiment toward either topic. For the three key questions in this report, both unweighted and weighted data have been provided.

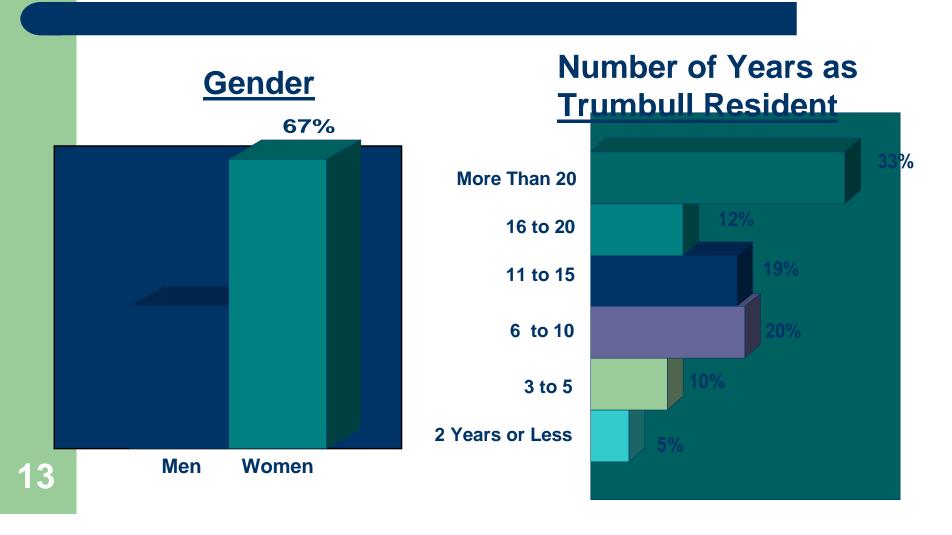
Executive Summary

At this time, based on residents' opinions, it seems logical to proceed with looking into putting the pool but not the Community Center at the High School complex.

- About two-thirds support the idea of a new pool at the High School (whether data are weighted or not to correct for age distribution of the sample compared to actual numbers for the Town). This idea does not divide the community like the idea of a Community Center at the High School does. Among families or individuals who utilize one or more of the existing pools in Trumbull, even stronger support for a new pool exists.
- Support for the Community Center especially in conjunction with the High School is considerably lower and quite polarizing especially among seniors and those who feel their property taxes have already risen to a point that is unaffordable or getting close to being so. Given the strong opposing sentiment, it would seem ill-advised to move forward with the Community Center at this time.

Detailed Findings

Substantially more women than men responded, which may be expected given the subject matter. One-third have lived in Trumbull for 20 years or more.



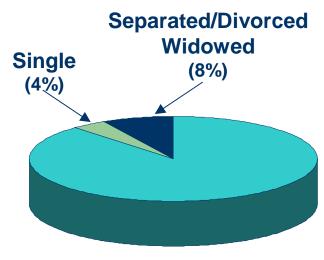
Respondents clustered in the 35 to 49 year-old age range, with a median age of 47, which is slightly older than the 41.8 years for Trumbull, as provided by the State of CT.

Most are married.

Age Distribution

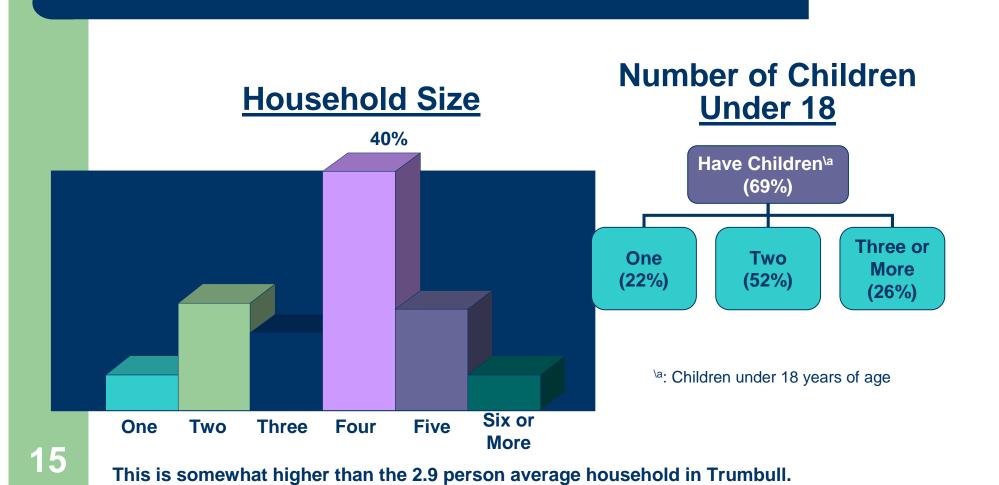
18 - 34 35 - 39 40 - 44 45 - 49 50 - 64 65 or Older

Marital Status

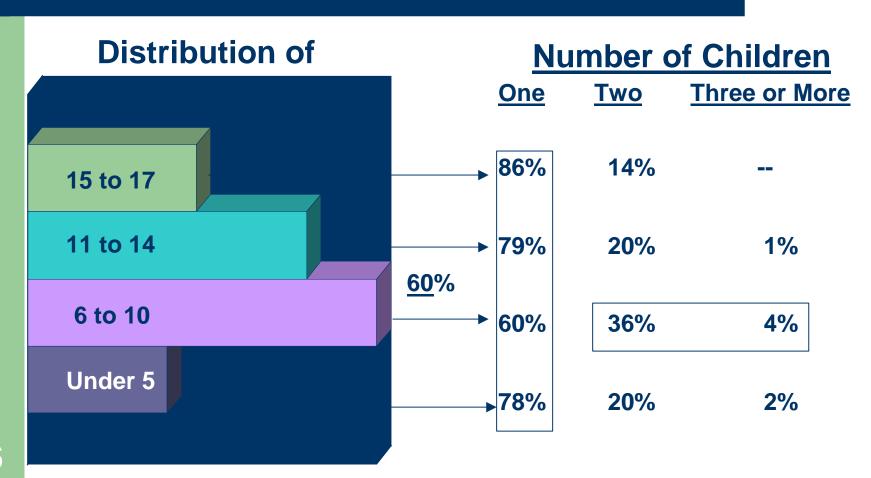


Married/ In Committed Relationship (88%)

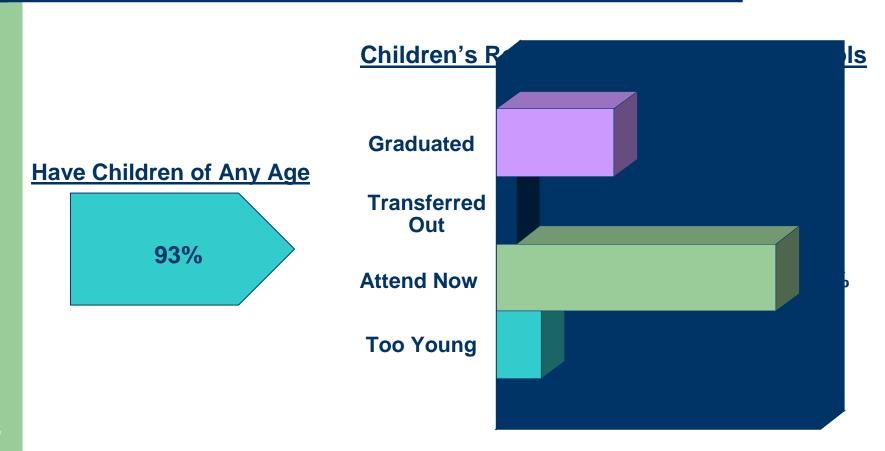
A typical Trumbull responding household consists of two adults and two children.



Families are most likely to have children from 6 to 10 years old, followed by 11 to 14 (60% and 48%, respectively). Usually, there is only one child of any particular age group in a household. Having multiple children about the same age is most common when the children are ages 6 to 10 (40%).



More than nine-in-ten respondents are parents. While a majority have children in Trumbull schools now (69%), several have children who graduated from them (29%).



Trumbull residents' love for learning, enjoying the water and being active outdoors is evident in the facilities used by the largest numbers of people.

Facilities Most Often Used:

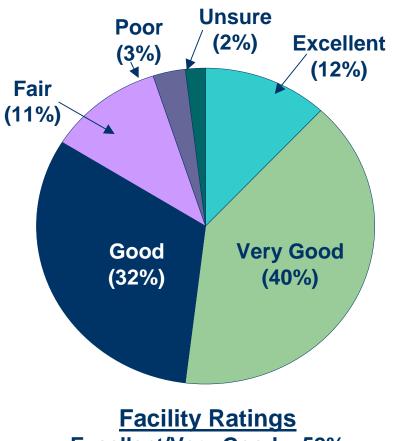
- **Libraries (69%)**
- **□** Beaches Pool (58%)
- **Tashua Knolls Pool (49%)**
- Children's Playgrounds (48%)
- Tashua Knolls Golf Course (39%)
- Pequonnock Rails to Trails (38%)
- Hillcrest Indoor Pool (33%)
- **Town Tennis Courts (32%)**

Facilities Least Often Used:

- Veteran's Center (2%)
- **BMX Racing Track (3%)**
- Volleyball Courts (4%)
- **□** Bocci Ball Courts (5%)
- Senior Center (7%)
- □ Teen Center (10%)
- Nature Center/Wildlife Pond (15%)
- **Basketball Courts (18%)**

Generally, residents are quite pleased with Trumbull's facilities. The Senior Center and Hillcrest Indoor Pool, however, detract from the high level of satisfaction.

- Quite a few seniors complained bitterly about the condition of the Senior Center.
- Parents of swimmers are embarrassed or concerned by the condition of Hillcrest Indoor Pool.



Excellent/Very Good = 52%

Examples of comments by seniors about the Senior Center

"Just clean up the Senior Center. We are old and can't wait forever."

"We need a new Senior Center, not a pool."

"The Senior Center is a disaster. Add a Senior Center and stop all work on the existing one."

"I think senior activities would best be served in a separate, standalone facility."

"We need a new senior center similar to the one Monroe and/or Easton have – a separate building. Not the old building we are using now."

Examples of concerns about Hillcrest Pool

"As a parent of a Pisces swimmer, I was embarrassed at a home meet to overhear some parents from the opposing team commenting on the poor condition of our pool. They said they hate coming to the meets in Trumbull because of the lack of spectator seating and the poor ventilation."

"I would like to see the pool incorporated but would not like to see the Hillcrest pool removed or filled in. With swimmers in our family, schedules for Pisces, Trumbull High School and St. Joseph's always proved challenging. If there were a swim meet, then Pisces couldn't practice. Two pools for the Town would be nice – especially since our YMCA has no pool."

"If the diving board breaks, we cannot [legally] replace it."

Residents and their families are quite active and use many of the programs offered in the Town.

Programs Used by The Most:

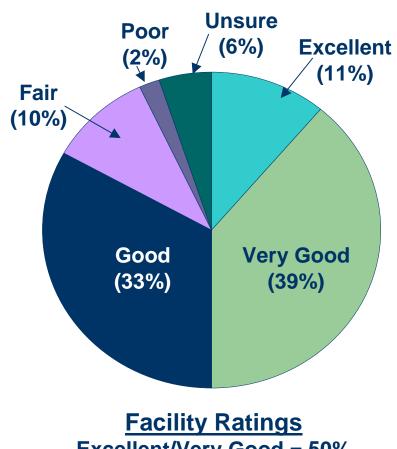
- **□** After School Programs (35%)
- Swimming/Lap Swim/Free Swim (29%)
- **Youth Soccer (25%) Youth Soccer (25%)**
- Little League Baseball (23%)
- Adult Education (21%)
- **□** Girl Scouts/Brownies (17%)
- Trumbull Loves Children (14%)
- Adult Rec Programs (13%)

Programs Used by The Least:

- Senior Programs at PriscillaPlace (2%)
- Special Needs Programs (3%)
- □ Pop Warner Football (5%)
- □ Babe Ruth Baseball (5%)
- Trumbull Lacrosse (6%)
- **□** Pisces Swim Team (6%)
- Youth Programs at Priscilla Place (6%)
- Boy Scouts/Cub Scouts (10%)
- Community Service (10%)

The same high level of satisfaction (72% "very good/good") as exists for the Town's facilities is evident for the programs offered.

- Virtually no concerns were expressed about any specific program except as they relate to facilities:
 - How the age and condition of the High School auditorium affects the "professionalism" of performances;
 - The shortage of practice space for music programs at the school.

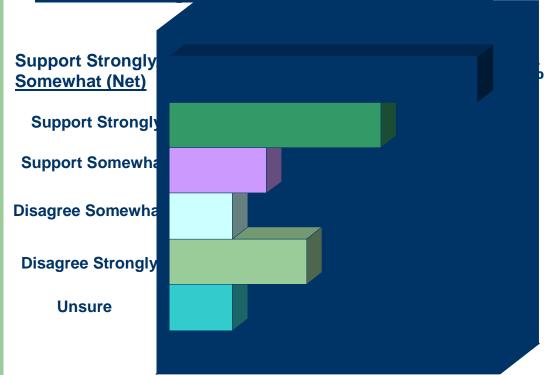


Excellent/Very Good = 50%

As A Community Center

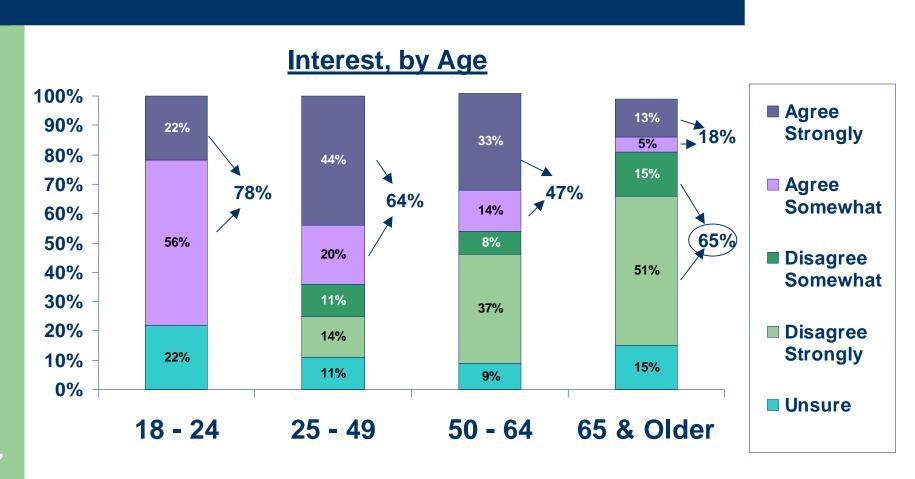
Having the High School also function as a Community Center with the "like new" renovation, is favored by just a slim majority of respondents.

Opinions about the High School Also Functioning as a Community Center



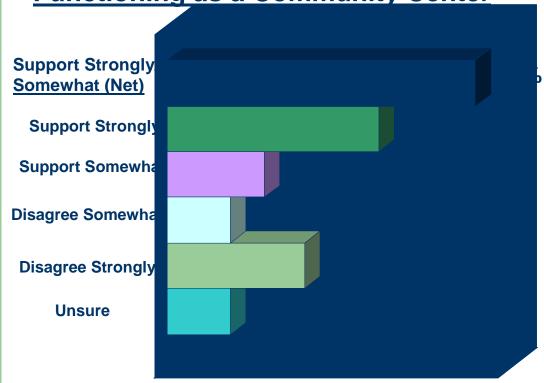
- Rising costs (oil, gas, food, etc.) coupled with the increased property tax burden historically and into the future are the primary concerns.
- If the Town were to decide on a Community Center at some time, there may be greater support for it in a more centralized location and not coupled with a school.

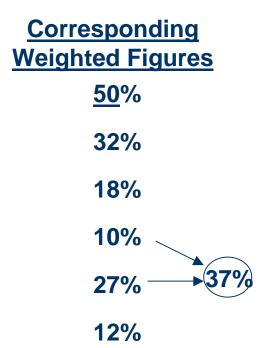
Interest in the High School also functioning as a Community Center declines with age, with opposition particularly pronounced among those 65 and older.



When responses to this question are weighted to account for the under-representation of seniors and those 18 to 24, support declines to exactly half, with nearly four-in-ten being against the idea.







The topic of the High School possibly functioning as a Community Center is quite polarizing.

- Parents of children still in school favored the idea most. A host of suggestions were made by people of all ages for facilities/ programs to be included. Examples are:
 - State-of-the art theater/performing center (which some thought could be used to generate revenue for the Town by bringing in professional performers and performances). This suggestion was made most frequently;
 - Meeting/conference/function rooms that could be rented out and/or large enough to accommodate Town Council meetings;
 - Additional gym/fitness space;
 - Computer center;
 - Game room;
 - A Teen Center more centrally located;
 - A coffee/snack area, coffee house or kitchen to prepare and serve people at meetings or events.

Those opposing the idea were quite vocal about their concerns regarding higher taxes, the overall cost, their perceived lack of need and potential safety issues.

Seniors and those living in Town the longest were most strongly against the Community Center idea, saying for example:

"I agree the High School should be renovated with all improvements needed to give the students a safe, clean, healthy environment to learn without all the extra frills that would raise taxes and make it more difficult for parents to give their children what they need. We don't need any of the extras at this time to only raise taxes. We have several community meeting places in town now."

"No additional programs/facilities! Taxes are high enough. You are running people out of town!"

Additional Examples of Opposing Thoughts

"The high school should serve as a high school only! Having functions adds to congestion, size of facilities, parking, etc. interferes with the educational process."

"Putting the Community Center and Pool at the High School is an s at

night. Stern Village residents entering and exiting and the normal flow of traffic from nearby residents would make Daniel Farms Road a very hazardous road."

"I'm against the Community Center at the High School. Trumbull has ample facilities that are easily accessible (i.e. Library Community Room, Senior Center, etc.).

"None. The High School is what its name states...We cannot afford these 'nice to haves.' Our taxes are too high already – years."

None of the potential facilities/programs were given strong support by even half responding. The Indoor Walking Track and Fitness Center/Weight Room had the highest endorsement levels.

Activities Most Favored for A Community Center

	Rated "1" to "3" (Low)	Rated "4" to "7" (Moderate)	Rated "8" to "10" (High)
Indoor Walking Track	34%	17%	49%
Fitness Center/Weight Rm.	38%	15%	47%
Large Multi-Purpose Room	42%	12%	36%
Yoga/Pilates	47%	20%	33%
Additional Gyms	44%	24%	32%
Aerobics/Dance Studio	45%	25%	30%

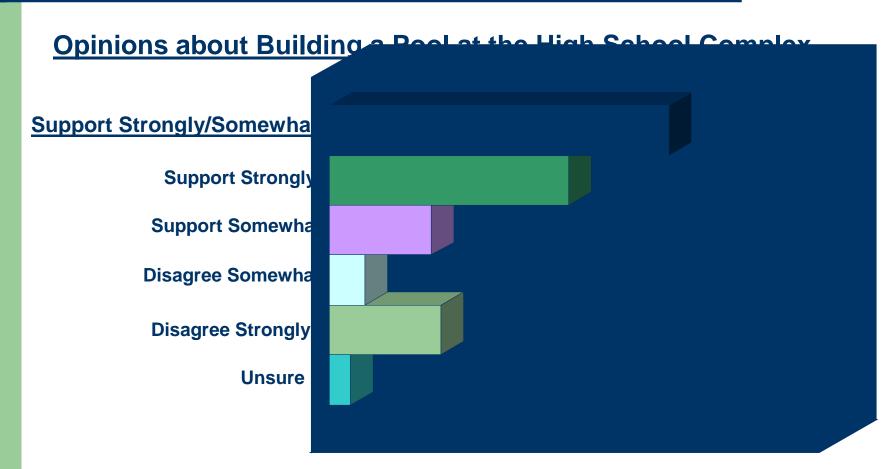
The Pre-School area, arts-oriented rooms, Senior Center/area and the small multi-purpose room received the lowest levels of support. Even among seniors, the Senior Center/area in the Community Center was endorsed by just 25%.

Activities Least Favored for A Community Center

	Rated "1" to "3" (Low)	Rated "4" to "7" (Moderate)	Rated "8" to "10" (High)
Small Multi-Purpose Room	51%	21%	28%
Senior Center/Area	52%	22%	26%
Art/Painting Room	49%	28%	23%
Crafts Room	51%	28%	21%
Pre-School Play Room	65%	19%	16%



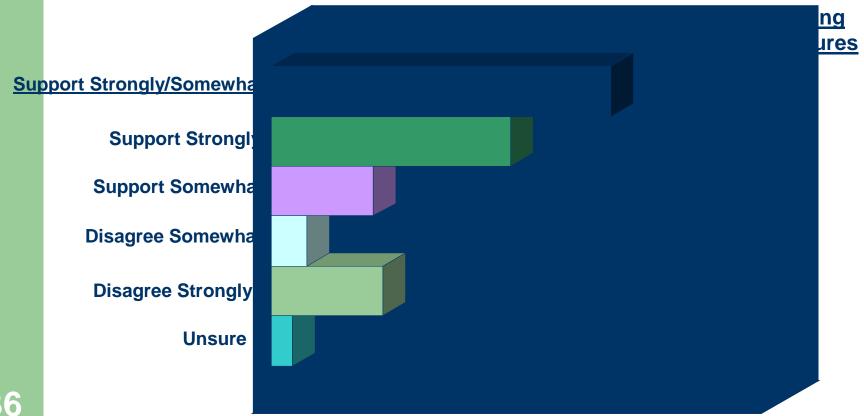
There is a two-thirds majority support for a new indoor pool at the High School, with nearly half (47%) strongly behind this idea.



When these responses are weighted to reflect the actual age distribution in the Town, little change is evident.

Support still exists for the pool.

Opinions about Building a Pool at the High School Complex



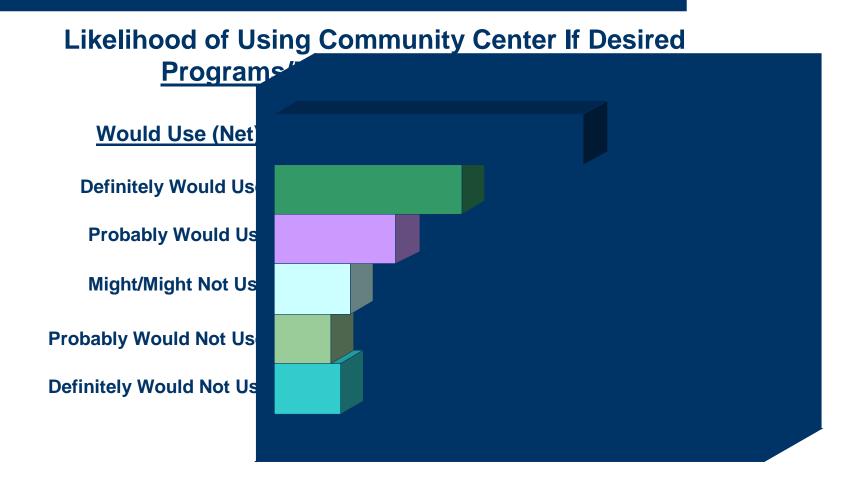
Families using one or more pools in Town are more likely than others to want a new pool at the High School complex.

While overall interest in the pool is at the two-thirds level (67%), among the following pool users, it is significantly higher:

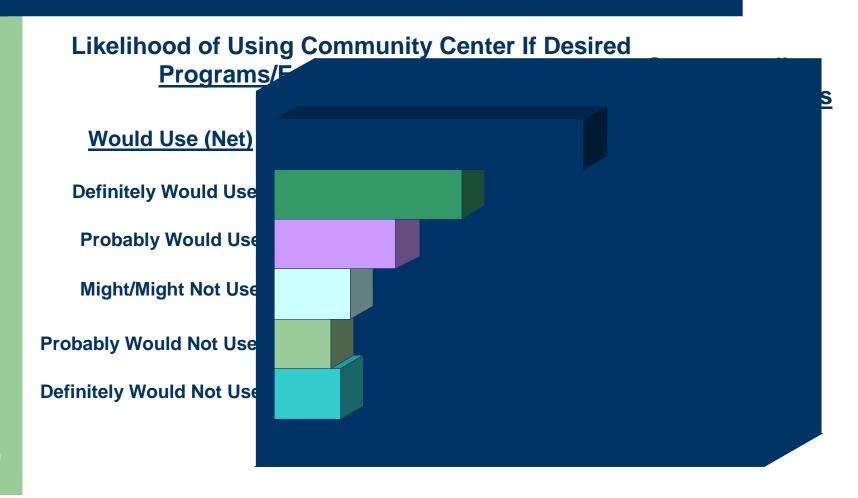
	Support Pool
Use <u>any</u> pool in town:	79 %
• Use Beaches Pool (58% of respondents):	77%
• Use Tashua Knolls Pool (39% of respondents):	81%
 Use Hillcrest Pool (33% of respondents): 	82%

Expectations for Using A Community Center If Desired

If the facilities and programs most desired by respondents were included in a Community Center, about six-in-ten would be interested in using it.



Once these responses are weighted for the correct age distribution, no significant change occurs in the level of interest.



Increased interest (from 54% to 61%) is due, primarily, to the potential for a pool, followed by the indoor walking track. A fitness center/weight room weighs in at a tertiary level.

In support of these findings:

- Fully nine-in-ten (90%) of those supporting the pool asserted they would "definitely/probably" use a Community Center if it included the programs and facilities in which they were most interested;
- The corresponding figure for the indoor walking track is 80% and, for the fitness center/weight room, it is 69%.